

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT NO. 44

21 Philbrook Street • Bethel, Maine 04217-4045

REC'D AUG

5 2009

David W. Murphy Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Tel. (207) 824-2185 Fax (207) 824-2725

August 5, 2009

Commissioner Susan Gendron
Department of Education
23 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0023

Dear Commissioner Gendron,

In response to your letter dated June 22, 2009, RSU 44 is submitting the attached alternative plan for your consideration.

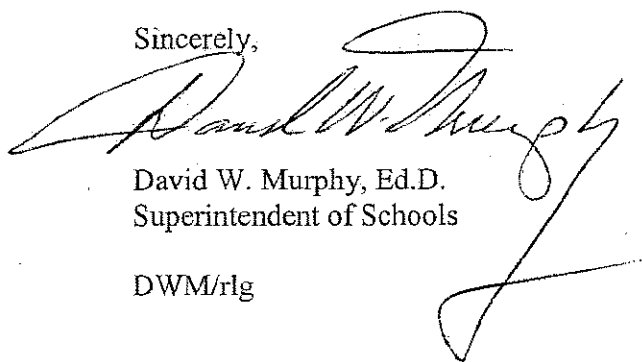
The plan demonstrates savings achieved in system administration, facilities and maintenance, transportation and special education and does not have an adverse impact on the instructional program.

Enclosed please find the following materials:

- * Notice of Intent
- * Alternative Plan Submittal Sheet and Checklist
- * Alternative Plan

I want to thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



David W. Murphy, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DWM/rlg

ALTERNATIVE PLAN SUBMITTAL SHEET

School Administrative Unit Submitting Alternative Plan:

- SAD 44

Contact Information:

Name: David W. Murphy, Ed.D.

Address: 21 Philbrook St.

Bethel, ME

04217

Telephone: 207-824-2185

email: murphyd@sad44.org

Date Plan Submitted by SAU: Aug 5, 2009

The intent to submit an alternative plan has been approved by the Commissioner in the approval of the Notice of Intent?

☒ YES

☐ NO

(If NO, please explain.)

Alternative Plan Cover Sheet

(Please attach Alternative Plan as Exhibit A)

Plan Requirements				
Item	Complete	In Progress	Not Yet Started	Need Assistance ¹
Plan addresses how the SAU will reorganize administrative functions, duties and noninstructional personnel so that projected expenditures of RSU in fiscal 2008-2009 for the following areas will not have an adverse impact on the instructional program.				
system administration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
special education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
facilities and maintenance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan addresses how cost savings will be achieved in fiscal 2008-2009 for the above four areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parameters for Plan Development				
Enrollment meets requirements (2,500 except where circumstances justify an exception)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
When viewed in conjunction with surrounding proposed units, may not result in one or more municipalities being denied the option to join an RSU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Includes at least one publicly supported high school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consistent with policies set forth in section 1451	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of teachers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No displacement of students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No closures of schools existing or operating during school year immediately preceding reorganization, except as permitted under section 1512	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative Agreements				
		Yes	No	
Does your plan currently include information/documentation on collaborative agreements? (not required, but encouraged)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

* approved as
donot hole

¹ Please explain what assistance you need to complete this portion of your plan, and state from whom you need assistance, on the next page.

Alternative Plan

SAU submitting: RSU #44/SAD #44
Contact Information: David W. Murphy, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Phone: 207-824-2185
E-mail: murphyd@sad44.org
Date Submitted: August 5, 2009

Due Diligence

Following unsuccessful efforts to consolidate with SAD #21, Hanover, SAD #43, Gilead, Upton, and the Towns of SAU #37 in 2007-08 and subsequent failed efforts to form an RSU with SAU #37 in 2008-09, the Commissioner of Education has approved RSU #44 for "donut hole" status.

Sustainability

RSU #44 has received strong and on-going support from its taxpayers over the years. Efforts to reduce costs and streamline operations have been noted and appreciated by residents in recent years.

Taxpayers have supported several recent projects including renovations of the Telstar auditorium and locker rooms, a water and sewer project that connected the Telstar complex to town resources, and the construction of a new track and football field.

The district is currently considering a November referendum to add a performing arts center and second gymnasium to the Telstar facility as a result of the Maine State Board of Education's approval of a Qualified School Construction Bond last month.

After a three (3) year period decline in student enrollment, school population appears to have stabilized. Forecasts indicate the possibility of a small increase in FY 10.

System Administration

<u>FY 08 Budget</u>	<u>FY 09 Budget</u>	<u>FY 10 Budget</u>
\$449,867	\$427,026	\$419,287

- * New chart of accounts has been implemented
- * Since FY 07, the positions of Business Manager and Curriculum Director have been eliminated and replaced with minimal contracted services. The amount budgeted for use of these services has been further reduced each year. Contracted business services averages one day per month and curriculum averages two or three days per month.
- * Competitive bidding of insurances in conjunction with surrounding districts has resulted in savings in that area.
- * Part-time Central Office receptionist position eliminated in FY 10.
- * Full-time Central Office secretarial position unfilled since FY 09.
- * Central Office staff reduced from 6.5 to 3.0 individuals since FY 07.

Facilities & Maintenance

<u>FY 08 Budget</u>	<u>FY 09 Budget</u>	<u>FY 10 Budget</u>
\$1,540,150	\$1,521,690	\$1,444,812

- * Elimination of debt on Telstar boilers.
- * \$86,790 reduction in oil and electricity from FY 09 to FY 10.
- * Increased efforts in energy efficiency throughout the district. All gymnasium lights in the Telstar complex were replaced by efficient lighting.

Transportation

<u>FY 08 Budget</u>	<u>FY 09 Budget</u>	<u>FY 10 Budget</u>
\$916,243	\$990,956	\$972,290

- * FY 10 budget reflects \$70,277 in gasoline and diesel savings.
- * Re-examination of all bus routes has resulted in fewer runs in the district in each of the past two years.
- * In recent years, the district moved from two (2) bus runs (K-5 and 6-12) to a single consolidated run to save money and increase efficiency.
- * Under the leadership of a new Transportation Director, a new inventory review and replacement procedure has been initiated within the department.
- * A new idling procedure has been put in place where bus idling is reduced based on outside temperature. This reduces fuel use and cost.
- * Use of Field Trip Manager software has reduced costs previously associated with the scheduling of trips through traditional planning methods.

Special Education

<u>FY 08 Budget</u>	<u>FY 09 Budget</u>	<u>FY 10 Budget</u>
\$1,082,963	\$1,155,429	\$1,035,499

- * Elimination of Psychological Examiner position and use of contracted services.
- * A review of caseloads in FY 09 has results in the consolidation of positions resulting in the reduction of one (1) teaching position for FY 10.
- * Reduction of Special Education Secretary from a full-year position to a part-time school year position in FY 10.

Collaborative Arrangements

RSU #44 has had a long standing relationship with other school systems in the area. We have worked cooperatively in the past with MSAD #43 and MSAD #21 on a variety of efforts including fuel bids and insurance purchases. In FY 08, our district shared a Special Education Director with MSAD #43. We also have shared a Food Services Director with MSAD #43 for the past two years. That arrangement is set to continue with RSU #10 for the FY 10 school year. We have also signed agreements for the third party coordination of our 403b accounts and purchased new accounting and payroll programs at the same time as MSAD #43 and received substantial discounts on the costs of those programs. We will continue to dialogue as future opportunities become available.

RSU #44 is also a charter member of the Western Maine Educational Collaborative and has used that resource for purchasing and professional development in recent years.



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

SUSAN A. GENDRON
COMMISSIONER

June 22, 2009

David Murphy, Superintendent
MSAD 44
21 Philbrook Street
Bethel, ME 04217

Dear Superintendent Murphy:

As a result of our conversations and the information presented to me by you and other representatives of MSAD 44, I believe that MSAD 44 meets the requirements to qualify for a "donut hole" exception under P.L. 2007, chapter 240, Part XXXX-36, Parameter 6(A)(7). I am particularly convinced of MSAD 44's eligibility for an exception due to the lack of potential partners willing to enter into a reorganization plan with MSAD 44.

You have shown considerable evidence of work to restructure administrative functions in your schools, and through collaboration with MSAD 21, MSAD 43 and MSAD 39 (RSU 10). Such restructuring is a requirement of any Alternative Plan and should be included in your final plan submission.

I also encourage you to continue working with the Gilead and Upton School Departments with whom you submitted a well crafted Reorganization Plan that was approved by the voters in Gilead, Upton and MSAD 44.

Please continue with your work and submit your Alternative Plan Submittal Sheet, Alternative Plan Cover Sheet (checklist), and Alternative Plan as soon as practicable. If you need assistance from Department staff as you proceed, please contact Jennifer Pooler at 624-6638 and she will coordinate that for you.

If you have questions as you move forward, I encourage you to contact Ray Poulin and Norm Higgins of our Reorganization Team for more information. They may be reached at 624-6802.

Sincerely,

Susan A. Gendron
Commissioner of Education